

VLR-12/6/95

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

5

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Vineyard Hill  
other names/site number VDHR 81-71

## 2. Location

street & number SR 608 (Forge Rd.) 1/8 mi. south of SR680 ☐ not for publication  
city or town Glasgow ☒ vicinity  
state Virginia code VA county Rockbridge code 163 zip code 24555

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☐ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- ☐ entered in the National Register.  
☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register  
☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
- ☐ removed from the National Register.
- ☐ other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Vineyard Hill

Name of Property

Rockbridge, VA

County and State

### 5. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

#### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

#### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
2	0	sites
0	1	structures
0	0	objects
3	1	Total

#### Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

#### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Industry: Manufacturing facility

#### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Not in use

### 7. Description

#### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Early Republic: Vernacular

#### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone: limestone

walls Stone: limestone

roof Metal: tin

other

#### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Vineyard Hill

Name of Property

Rockbridge Co., VA

County and State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☒ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #1974 Va. Inventory (pg. 365)
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

### Period of Significance

Late eighteenth century

### Significant Dates

1786 (first record of existence)

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Unknown

### Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

### Name of repository:

VDHR File No. 81-71

Vineyard Hill  
Name of Property

Rockbridge Co., VA  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.5

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	17	637650	4171480
Zone	Easting	North	ing
2			

3			
Zone	Easting	North	ing
4			

☒ See continuation sheet and CGS map

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Thomas M. Kastner  
organization N/A date \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number Rt. 4, Box 247 telephone 540-261-1221  
city or town Lexington state VA zip code 24450

#### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

Maps Glasgow Quadrangle, VA 7.5 minute series

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

A site map (fig.4. sect7.) is included and denotes origin of exterior photographs

#### Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

#### Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

#### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Mr. James McAleer  
street & number 11 Morrison Dr. telephone 540-463-4649  
city or town Lexington state VA zip code 24450

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number 7 Page 1Vineyard Hill  
Rockbridge Co., VA**7. SUMMARY DESCRIPTION**

Vineyard Hill, as considered herein, consists of a late eighteenth century stone house and the ruins of a fulling mill and spring house, all sited on a 4.6 acre plot of land adjoining SR 608, the former Lexington to Lynchburg turnpike, in Rockbridge County, Virginia. This site is the core of the once extensive holdings in fork of the James of Alexander Beggs one of the earliest settlers in this area. The house, vernacular in style, is characteristic of early rural dwellings built by men of substance in the upper Shenandoah Valley in the late eighteenth century. It is the best remaining example of such in the south east section of Rockbridge County.

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

The house is sited on the side of a knoll some 75 yards north of the road. It is constructed of rough coursed limestone with a rectangular plan. From the front (photo 1.) the house shows three stories with a window/door arrangement of three bays. The east and west walls are solid with recessed chimneys (photos 2. and 3.) and the roof is simply gabled and of tin. Seen from the north (photo 4.) only the upper stories are evident due to the gradient of the site. A short three bay porch dating from the 1900s, covers the front entrances of the first and second stories. A modern addition on the east end of the house blends well with the basic architecture and even appears appropriate with the past as both the plan of the second floor with a door to the east, and iron bracing fragments in the outer masonry indicate that at one time one or more frame additions had been attached to the east wall.

The first or lower story consists of a single large room with a front entrance only and access to the upper floor by a 180° staircase in the south west corner. Principal features of interest are the large open hearth (photo 5.) along the east wall and the rough hewn beams of the ceiling (Figure 6.). The existing floor is cement over crushed gravel.

The second or main floor features three fireplaces and entrances to the south (front), north (rear) and east (side). The existing plan of two rooms is shown in Fig. 1., and the general arrangement depicted in photos 7, 8, 9, and 10. The ceiling beams show some evidence of a previous arrangement with a center hall, with a single room to the west and two to the east; however, it is surmised from the hearth arrangement that the original plan was most likely for three rooms formed by wooden partitioning within the central stone structure (see fig. 2.).

The outer walls of the interior are plaster laid over the stone construction of the house walls. The small room to the south east has been formed by a wooden partition of wide, single bead, poplar planks reputed to be from the original construction.

Similarly the interior doors, nicely made of light poplar with a six panel design, are reputed to be original. (Photo 11.) A considerable renovation of the house occurred in 1970 during which in addition to the incorporation of modern utilities and the addition of a new east wing the current interior configuration was established using already existing materials as appropriate.

The upper story is shown on plan in fig. 3. It's configuration dates from the renovation of 1970 and generally is in keeping with the basic architecture of the dwelling. It is reached by an enclosed stair in the NW corner of the main floor (photo 6.).

Stairs at the west end of the upper hall lead to a full length attic lit by two small windows at either gable end. In it the exposed rafters show a pegged joining of rough hewn beams (Photo 12.)

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Rockbridge Co., VA

A schematic view of the house and adjacent ruins is shown in figure 4. In addition to the house the property contains two ruins: the stone foundation of a spring house and what is thought to have been a fulling mill. The latter is mentioned specifically in Alexander Beggs's will of 1786 (the first locally recorded evidence of the house and mill). Traces of a race taken from nearby Poagues or Mill Creek to serve the fulling mill are still evident. These ruins are depicted in photos 13, 14, and 15. Behind the house, to the west, are earth terraces that may be remnants of an early garden layout.

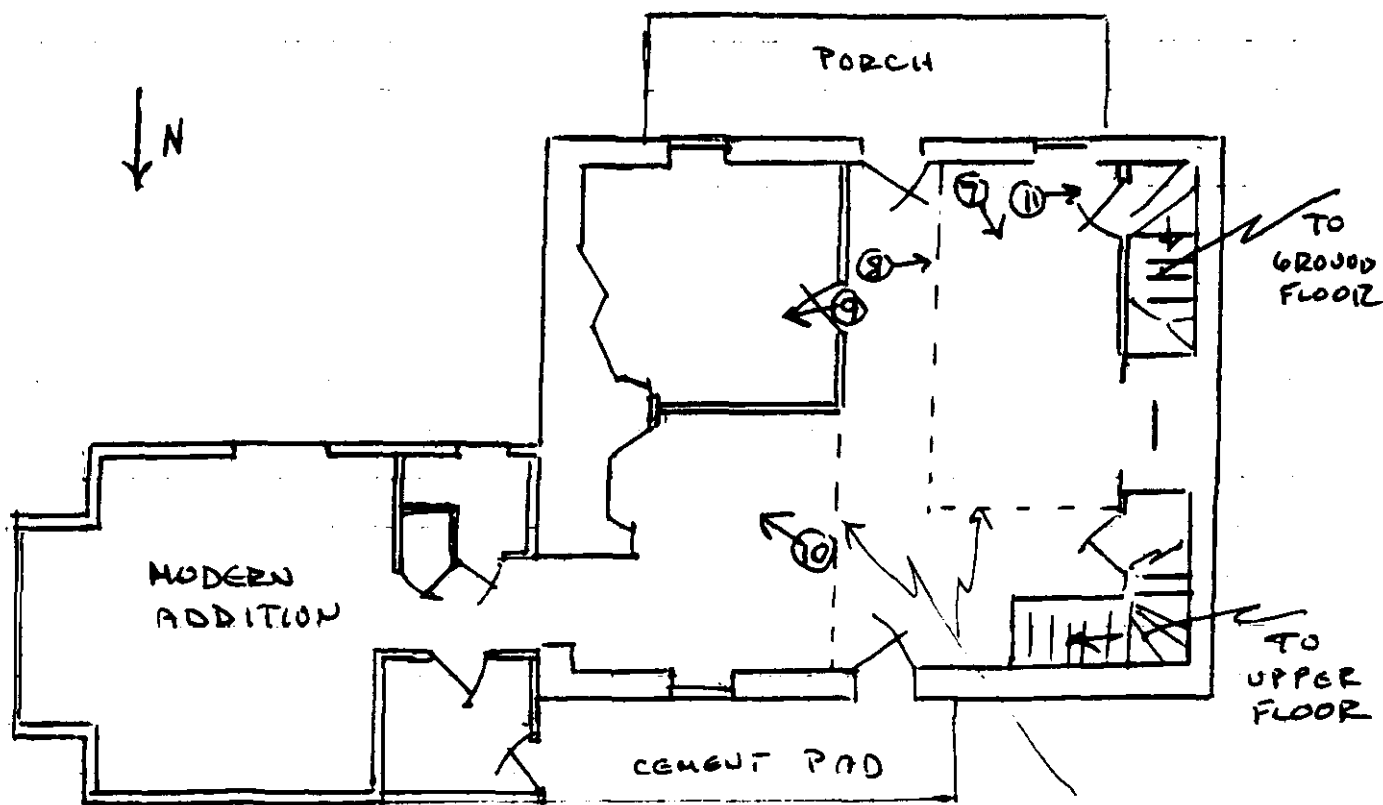
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Scale: 1/4" = 5'



○ →  
Denotes photo  
origins

VINEYARD HILL  
MAIN FLOOR

Late nineteenth  
century partitions

Fig 1

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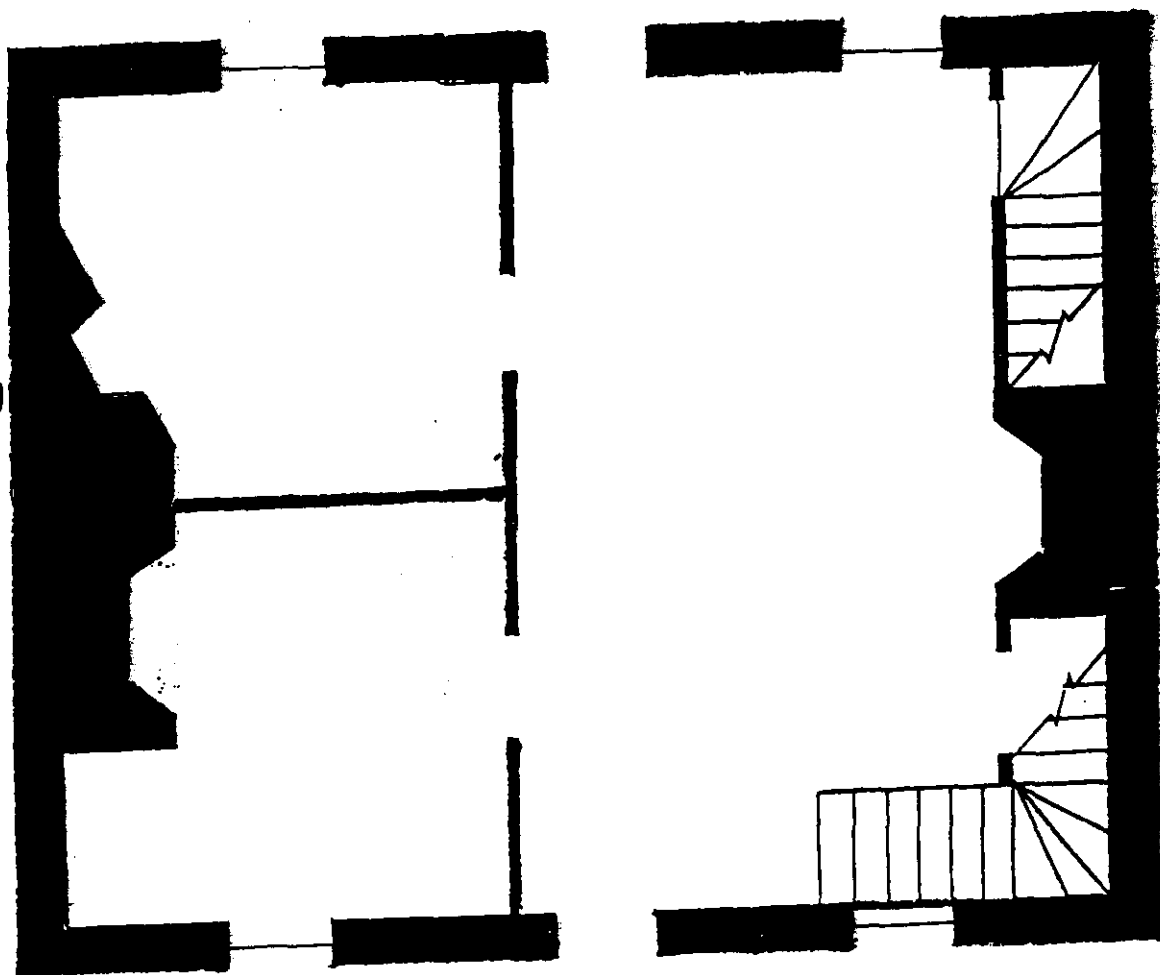
Vineyard Hill  
Rockbridge Co., VA

VINEYARD HILL  
MAIN FLOOR  
SUSPECTED  
ORIGINAL  
CONFIGURATION

FIG. 2



Scale  
1/4" = 1'





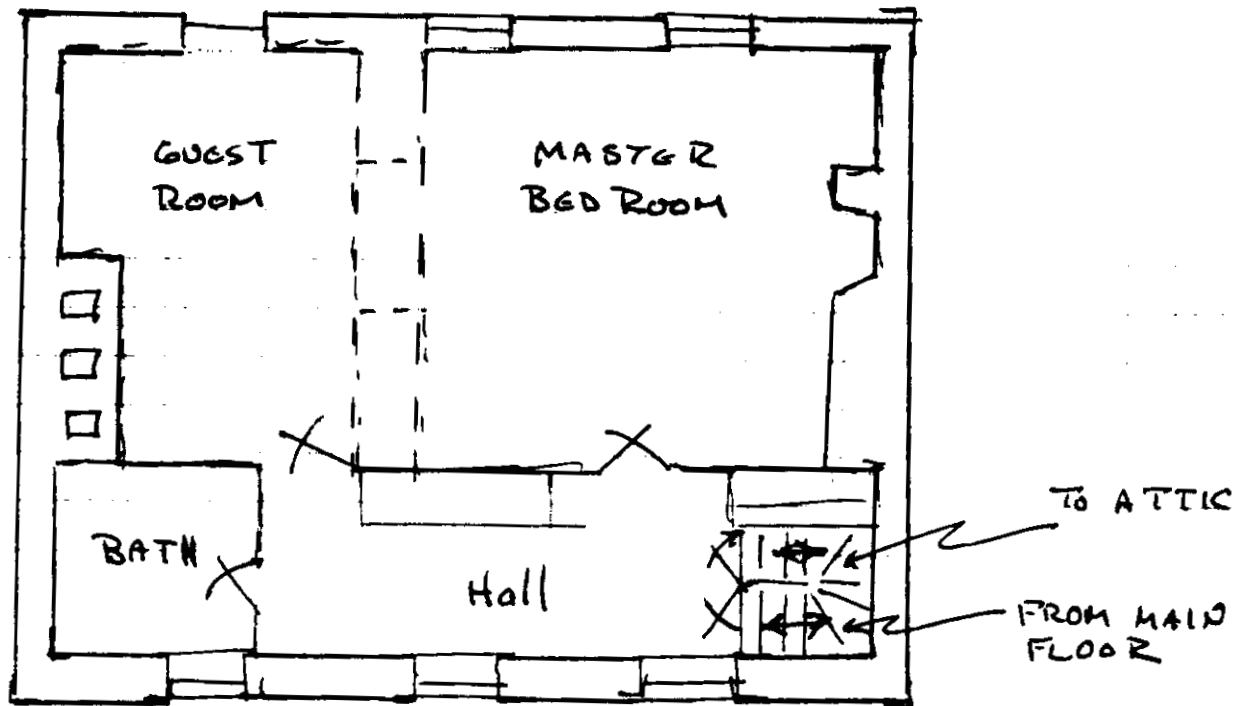
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Vineyard Hill  
Rockbridge Co., VA

Scale → 2' ←



VINEYARD HILL  
UPPER FLOOR

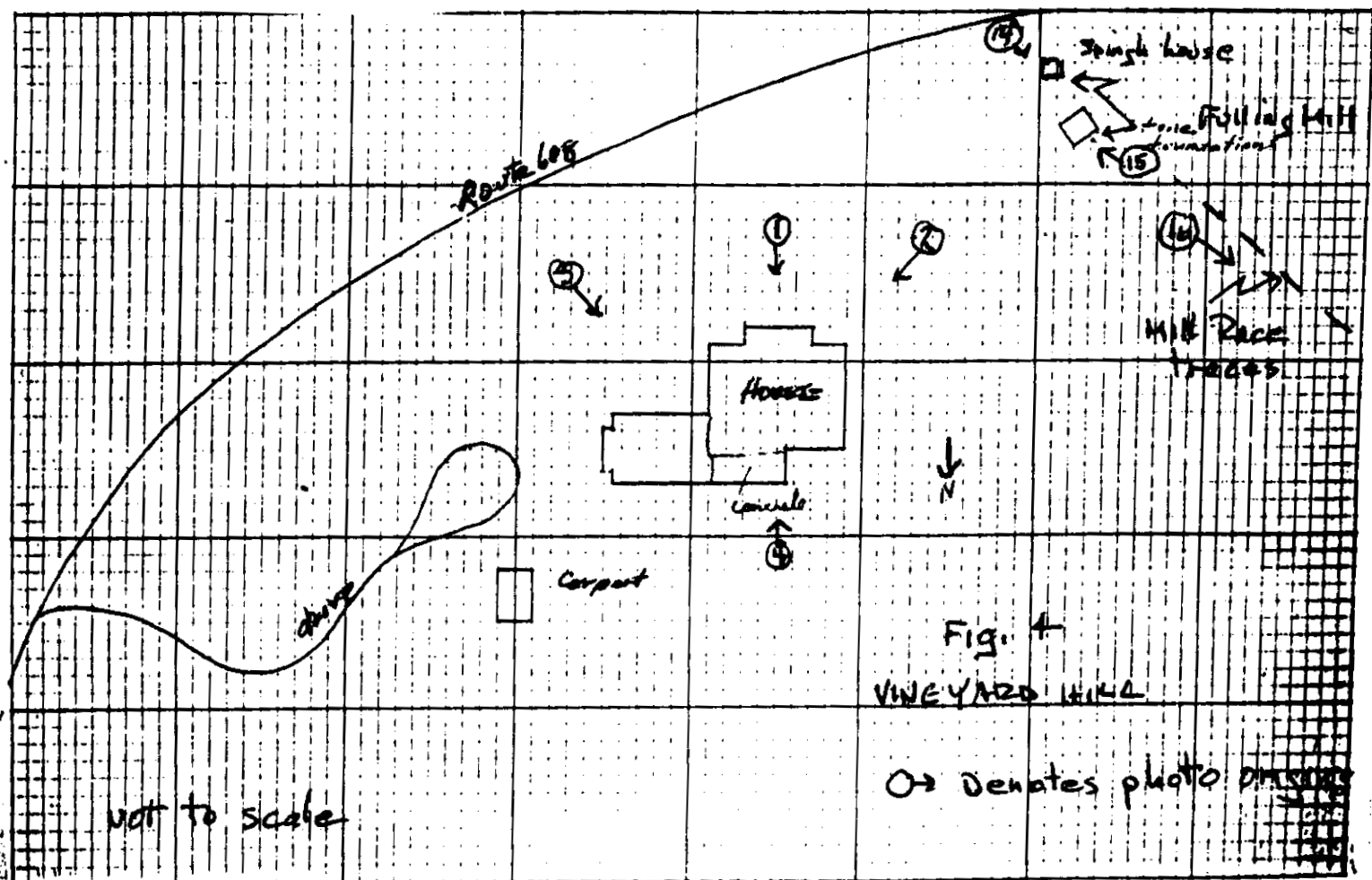
FIG. 3

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Rockbridge Co., VA



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Vineyard Hill  
Rockbridge Co., VA

### 8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Vineyard Hill is of historical significance as an excellent example of the earliest rural architecture of substance in the upper Valley. It is now believed to be the first of the several prosperous plantation/homes that lay along the old road (now SR 608) following the first ridge line west of the Blue Ridge. Vineyard Hill is the oldest and represents a vernacular style in its stone construction and interior arrangement stemming from the Scotch Irish background of the settlers. As such it differs significantly from the style of its early neighbors which being built somewhat later in the early years of the nineteenth century are predominantly of brick construction in the I-house style.

While stone construction represented a major advance in the area's material culture, a move away from a frontier society towards a settled agrarian order, early stone dwellings have become very rare in the county. Less than ten eighteenth-century stone houses are thought to remain in Rockbridge County, making Vineyard Hill a significant element of the historic landscape.

The renovation of 1970 has skillfully retained the original character of Vineyard Hill while bringing it up to date as a viable residence thereby assuring its preservation for the immediate future. Establishment of landmark status at both the state and national levels is seen as a constructive step toward furthering the continued preservation of Vineyard Hill as an excellent example of early rural architecture in America.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

History of the property and dwelling begins with Alexander Beggs (sometimes known as Baggs) one of the earliest settlers in this region. Beggs, presumably a Scotsman, who joined the Scotch Irish immigrants to America in the first half of the eighteenth century is thought to have reached the valley about 1745. Here he set about establishing himself as a farmer and seems to have prospered as early records show him making various land purchases to expand his holdings and holding public office as constable. His acquisition of the property associated with Vineyard Hill is thought to date from 1750 when he received by patent 150 acres along Mill Creek. The first written record of the existence of the stone house and outbuildings is found in Beggs' will of 1786 leaving the property to his son Thomas.

Various maps and surveys of the nineteenth century in the Brady family collection show a number of outbuildings, very likely farm related, adjacent the stone house. No significant remains are today evident and it is locally related that most were demolished either by time or incident to the general restoration and refurbishment performed in 1969-71.

A subsequent history of the ownership of the house and immediate property is presented in appendix 1. It served as a rural dwelling throughout the nineteenth century with some interior modifications and changes to attachments, such as the front porch and frame side buildings, yet the basic structure of the house remained unchanged.

Origin of the name VINEYARD HILL is of some historical interest, as it relates to one of the earliest attempts to develop viticulture in the Shenandoah Valley. As noted in the chronology of ownership, in 1863 the Begg's property was acquired by William Weaver who had established himself as one of the county's leading industrialists with his foundry at Buffalo Forge (an early Beggs holding), and was then expanding his properties in the area with respect to both agriculture and forestry (for charcoal). With the decay of the iron works following the Civil War, Weaver heirs turned to a variety of schemes seeking economic success. One of these projects was to produce wine. A French horticulturist was engaged and vinifera stock imported and planted over a considerable acreage. This is shown on the map presented as Figure 5. Here the largest area under cultivation is the 57 acres immediately to the west of the stone house. Brady family records show

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that the effort continued long enough to produce a product considered suitable for shipment to Bordeaux for resale through French distribution. Reportedly the wine was not saleable and the Virginians effort soon discontinued. One can not but wonder at the optimism that prompted the shipping enterprise, and a further examination of Brady records is planned to investigate the matter in some detail.

Later in the 1900s the house became vacant due to a lack of modern utilities, but following extensive renovation in 1970 was again a viable dwelling and remains so today as the residence of Mr. James McAleer the current owner.

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## VINEYARD HILL

## CHRONOLOGY

The stone house stands on land owned by Alexander Beggs (also Baggs) at the time of his death in 1786. Its date of construction cannot be determined from local records (Rockbridge County was formed in 1778), as the first year in which the value of buildings and improvements was identified in the county Land Books was 1820. Previous to that year, the assessed value of Alexander Beggs' and his son Thomas' property remained constant. This, and the primitive style and construction of the building, strongly indicates that it was built prior to (1782) the earliest year for which land records are available. The following is a chronology of references to Alexander Beggs and an abstract of ownership following his death.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Page</u>
24 Nov 1750	James & Sarah Trimble sold Alexander Baggs 250A on Buffalo Creek (a tributary of the North Fork of the James River)	(1) (2)	73 291
1765	Alexander Baggs patents 150A on Mill Creek (a tributary of Buffalo Creek)	(3)	351
8 Sept 1772	William Taylor sold Alexander Baggs 200A on North River (North Fork of James River)	(1)	430
7 Mar 1786	Alexander Baggs will (dated 19 Nov 1785) proved. Devises to son Thomas the plantation Alexander Baggs then lived on.	WB1	254
3 Feb 1840	Thomas Baggs will (dated 3 Jan 1835) proved. Devises to various children the farms they then lived on and lends balance to wife (m Ann Whitley 14 Apr 1786) to be sold at her death with proceeds divided.	WB8	325
1 Jan 1853	Confirmation of sale by Commissioners at auction (4 Nov 1854) of 121 A 113P to Wm. Weaver of undivided portion of Thos. Baggs' estate on which his widow resided at her death (Ann Baggs' Administrators' Bond posted (1 Nov 1853) (WB12 616)), under decree in Chancery cause "W. F. Pongue vs. Wm. Weaver" 15 Apr 1854 (File 113 - Bundle 572). Plat referred to in this deed filed with this cause, also newspaper advt. of sale (dated 5 Oct 1854) describing property to include stone house.	DBJJ	253

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14 Apr 1887	Title to undivided interests in two tracts to C. P. A. Brady (31/100) Annie G. Brady (32/100) and Sarah E. Lynch (37/100) from S. H. Letcher, Commissioner, conveyed under decree in Chancery cause " <u>Emma M. Brady, Admr. vs Wm. Weaver's Exr.</u> (14 Apr 1887) (File 128 - Bundle 398).	DB53	449
20 Nov 1894	Sarah E. Lynch bought from C. P. A. & M. G. Brady & Annie G. Brady, all joint owners, their interests in Lots 1, 2, and 3, part of lands devised by Wm. Weaver and conveyed by S. H. Letcher, Commissioner.	DB81	187
19 Jul 1901	Mary M. Lemon bought from Sarah E. & F. P. Lynch (291A) being the same as Lot 1 referred to in DB81-231. Plat with DB91-187 shows this lot.	DB91	187
1 Apr 1904	S. M. Johnson bought from Mary M. & Andrew J. Lemon 291A being the same tract conveyed in DB91-187.	DB97	75
1 Jan 1922	J. C. Johnson bought from S. M. Johnson (his father) (36.24A). Plat with deed shows stone house.		
19 Oct 1954	J. C. Johnson died. Devised property to wife Fannie D. Donald.	WB66	2
6 Aug 1964	Fannie D. Johnson died. Devised property to niece Annabell Camden Carr.	WB79	213
22 Sept 1966	Donald B. Clayton, Jr. bought (21.6A) from Annabell C. Carr. Plat with deed shows stone house	DB294	305

1970

*Purchased by present owner James A. Meador*

## References:

- (1) Kegley's Virginia Frontier F. B. Kegley
  - (2) Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia Volume III, Lyman Chalkley (extracted from Augusta County records)
  - (3) A History of Rockbridge County, Oren F. Morton
- WB Will Book, Rockbridge County Courthouse  
DB Deed " " " "

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### 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Brady, D.E., Family Papers  
Chalkey, Lyman, *Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia*  
Kegley, F.B., *Kegley's Virginia Frontier*  
Morton, O.F., *A History of Rockbridge Co.*  
Rockbridge County Records, Will Book  
Deed Book  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, Survey 81-71 of Jan. 1978  
W.P.A. of Virginia, Historical Inventory, Rockbridge Co. 1937

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## 10. VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION OF VINYARD HILL

\* \* \* \* \* all of that certain tract of land, together with the buildings and improvements thereon, and the rights and appurtenances thereunto belonging, fronting on the north side of State Road #608 in Buffalo Magisterial District \* \* \* containing approximately 4 acres, more or less, and being all of a tract of land originally containing 21.60 acres, more or less, conveyed unto the parties of the first part from Anabelle Camden Carr and husband, by Deed dated 22 September 1966, of record in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Rockbridge County in Deed Book 294 at page 306, after deducting the following outconveyances:

1. Deed to Jacques Fl Talbot and wife, dated 8 July 1969, conveying Lots "F" and "G", of record in Deed Book 310 at page 55.
2. Deed to Emmitt Earl Wines, dated 9 July 1969, conveying 11 acres, of record in Deed Book 310 at page 74.
3. Deed to Eugene D. Mull and wife, dated 11 August, 1970, conveying 1.5 acres, of record in Deed Book 316 at page 161.
4. Deed to Stephen V. Wines and wife, dated 10 August 1970, conveying 1.4 acres of record in Deed Book 311 at page 162.
5. Deed to Ernest Barnett and wife, dated 15 October, 1970, conveying 1 acre, of record in Deed Book 319 at page 303.

The land here in conveyed is \* \* described as follows:



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BEGINNING at a point in the right of way of Road # 608, bearing S 54 -00' W 204.5 from a point opposite the centerline of a metal culvert under Road # 608, corner to Glenn C. Johnson, Jr. (Deed Book 224 at page 197); THENCE N 22 - 44' W 239.3' with line of Glenn C. Johnson, Jr. to a point; THENCE N 79 -24' W 224' with line of Jacques F. Talbot to a point; THENCE S 81 -10' W 73.3' to a corner fence post on line with E.F. Wines; THENCE S 36 - 30' W 247.5' with fence to a corner fence post with line of E.F. Wines; THENCE S 15 -00' 369.0' with fence to a point in

the right of way of Road # 608, with line of E. E. Wines, passing a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " iron pipe by fence at 339.0' (Plat Book 2 at page 113 - bearing corrected for  $\frac{1}{2}$  change in magnetic declination); THENCE N 54 -00' 747.7' along right of way of Road # 608, crossing spring branch at 110.7' to the Point of Beginning. Magnetic declination 5 West.

(2)  
This Deed also specifically conveys unto the parties of the second part, without warranty of title, any remaining strip of land which fronts on the south side of State Road # 608, and extends back in a Southwesterly direction to the real estate conveyed by this deed.

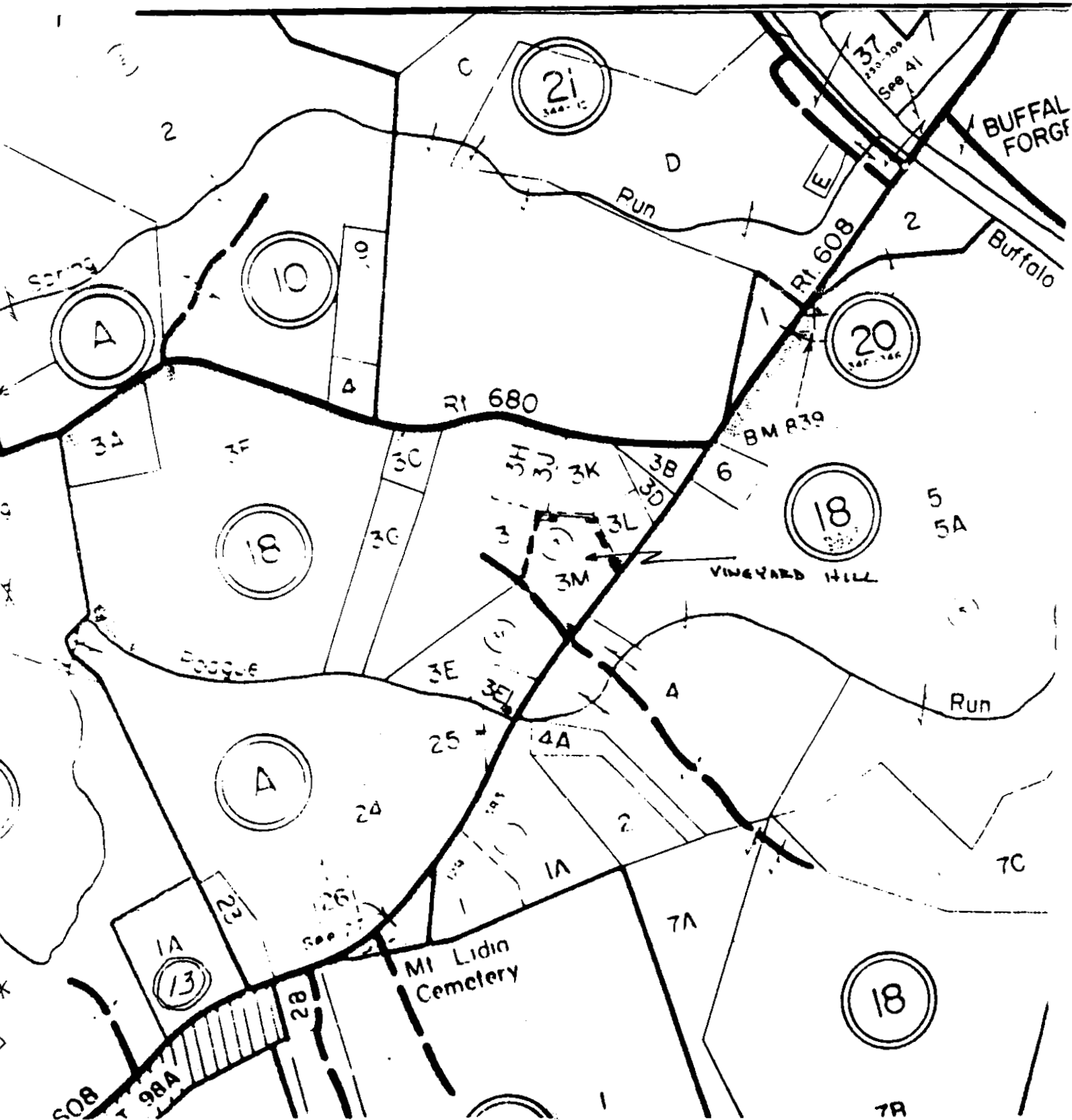
The property nominated is shown in the attached fragment of the Rockbridge County tax map for the Buffalo District.

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### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

While considerably less than the several hundred acres of farm land of the first owner, Alexander Beggs, the designated plot of 4.5 acres coincides with the current deed of ownership and contains both the dwelling and site of historical significance of this nomination.

